

## **Important Information Regarding License Renewal**

### **• NEW FOR 2012**

Every licensee renewing a professional license **MUST** submit a **Secure and Verifiable Document** (SVD) with their renewal to verify legal, lawful presence in the United States. Please visit the website [www.sos.ga.gov/plb](http://www.sos.ga.gov/plb) for information on SVD's acceptable to the Board. Your license will not be renewed until this documentation is received, and delays in processing will occur, especially towards the actual expiration date, so renew as early as possible.

- Please be sure to take time during the online renewal process and **read** every screen and answer every question. **IF** you are selected for a Continuing Education audit (henceforth CE Audit), you will be notified during the online renewal process of the selection by the statement "You have been selected for a CE Audit" in red (font color) below your name. Please follow the audit directions.
- **PLEASE keep your e-mail (and mailing) address up to date** as you will receive an e-mail notification of the "Hold" placed on your license renewal for the CE Audit (or other reason for a "Hold" to be placed if applicable). NO further information will be provided. It is your responsibility to follow those directions at the time of your renewal and fax or mail your continuing education certificates to the Board office.
- **To prevent a delay in the renewal of your license**, please renew before the **October 31<sup>st</sup>** (of every even numbered year) license expiration date; either online or by requesting a paper renewal form to be mailed to you. **YOU** are responsible for keeping and having your continuing education certificates of attendance easily accessible in the event you are audited so you can fax or mail the documents immediately to the Board office to prevent any delay in your license renewal.
- **If you renew by mail**, please be aware that it can take ten (10) to fifteen (15) business days for the Board office staff to receive and process your renewal form. Please mail your renewal form well in advance of the expiration date to prevent any delay in your license renewal.
- **In the event you are selected for a CE Audit**, you are required to mail copies of your continuing education certificates (originals will not be returned) of attendance to the Board office. Please review your certificate(s) to **verify that all information that is required by the Board is listed:**

**Continuing Education Certificates MUST include the following required information:**

- (1) Your name and Georgia license number;
- (2) The date(s) of the class;
- (3) The Instructors name with a contact number;
- (4) The name of the class;
- (5) The NCBTMB Provider number;
- (6) The number of continuing education hours;
- (7) Classification of a **"hands on"** class or **"online/home study/lecture"** class.

**\*"Hands on" means direct hands on placement or movement on the physical body.**

**NOTE:** The Board staff **is not responsible** for contacting providers to verify and complete this information for you.

If the certificate does not contain the above information, you will be notified by letter or email that your continuing education information is deficient. You will need to submit the required information. This can take ten (10) to fifteen (15) business days and will delay your renewal, sometimes going past the expiration date of your license. Continuing to practice after the expiration date without a current, active license is in direct violation of Georgia law.

### **Plan your Continuing Education now – DON'T wait.**

Plan and obtain your continuing education hours to meet the requirements for the next renewal period (October 31<sup>st</sup> of every even numbered year) early in the two year cycle, don't wait until the month of expiration. Remember, twenty-four (24) hours are required for renewal of which twelve (12) must be 'hands on', the remaining twelve (12) hours may be 'online,' 'home-study' or 'hands on' - See Board rule 345-4-.02.

Be sure that your certificate has the required information noted above. Also, the continuing education hours are to be obtained between November 1<sup>st</sup> of every even numbered year and October 31<sup>st</sup> of the following even numbered year (for example: between November 1, 2010 and October 31, 2012).

Any continuing education hours that are obtained between November 1<sup>st</sup> and November 30<sup>th</sup> of the even numbered year expiration date (for the current renewal period) will be accepted, however, you may be issued a Board ordered **Public Reprimand and required to pay a monetary fine in order to renew the license.**

All continuing education hours must be obtained during the two year (biennium) renewal cycle/period between expiration dates. Keep in mind that when you renew you will also be asked, CE Audit selection or not, to answer 'Yes' or 'No' to certify that you have completed your continuing education requirements to renew your license. If it is determined at a later date you answered this renewal question "yes" and did not actually obtain the required CE hours, your license will be subject to disciplinary actions up to and possibly including revocation of said license.

A Board ordered public reprimand is linked to your license number on the website page of a professional license verification for the general public, or employer, to review and will remain permanently on your record. It is a legal document.

### **"Petition for Waiver or Variance of a Board Rule" Request**

Under the Georgia code, **O.C.G.A § 50-13-9.1 Variances or waivers to rules**, any individual may petition the Board to consider a waiver or variance of a Board rule, but not a Georgia Law, based on a "Substantial Hardship" (as defined in the code section) that is the reason for the waiver or variance request. This form is **NOT** to be used to request an extension of time to obtain CE Hours; you must prove to the Board a verifiable substantial hardship to support your request. The "Petition for Waiver or Variance" of a Board rule (henceforth "Petition") can be found on the website: <http://sos.georgia.gov/cgi-bin/plbforms.asp?board=50>

Please complete the petition in its entirety and fully explain your hardship situation, including all dates of services provided if applicable, to the Board. It is imperative that you send all supporting documents regarding your “substantial hardship” **along** with your completed “Petition” to the Board office (by fax or USPS mail). By law, the petition must be posted for public review on [http://sos.georgia.gov/rules\\_regs.htm](http://sos.georgia.gov/rules_regs.htm) for a minimum of fifteen (15) days before the Board can vote on their response. Your petition and any supporting documentation will be reviewed at the next scheduled Board meeting.

Some examples, non-inclusive, of supporting documentation may include:

- For a medical hardship: please provide any documentation that will verify and prove your medical hardship, and the duration of the hardship, such as medical bills in your name, a letter from your physician(s) and financial records. Actual dates of service must be clearly indicated.
- For a financial hardship: Please provide any documentation that proves your financial hardship, and the duration of the hardship, such as legal financial records, statements, accountant records, tax returns, etc.

If you submit a “Petition” request, please be sure to check the Board’s website for the scheduled board meetings in advance so that your license renewal will not be delayed. The site is: [www.sos.ga.gov/plb/massage](http://www.sos.ga.gov/plb/massage). Sending in a “Petition” request **does not mean the request has been granted**, the decision to grant or approve a waiver can only be made by the Board, not the Board staff. You will be notified by e-mail or USPS of the Board’s decision in five (5) to ten (10) business days following the Board meeting.

Please keep in mind that if your “Petition” is not granted you will need to plan ahead to have time to obtain your required CE Hours (including the twelve (12) “hands on” requirement) before the October 31<sup>st</sup> even numbered year expiration date. Submit your “Petition” and supporting documents as early as possible to the Board. Otherwise, a Board ordered Public Reprimand and a monetary fine may be required by the Board for continuing education hours taken after the expiration date of October 31<sup>st</sup>, of every even numbered year, i.e. hours not obtained in the two (2) year licensure cycle.

### **Fines for Noncompliance with Continuing Education Hour Requirements for Renewal of Licenses:**

The Board policy with regard to those individuals obtaining the required continuing education hours for renewal **after** the October 31<sup>st</sup> even numbered year expiration date:

### **Continuing Education Fine Scale Policy:**

Effective for the 2012-2014 biennial renewal period, any licensee selected for the continuing education audit who completes their online (or mails in a paper form) renewal and answers “yes” to having obtained the required number of hours to renew his/her license, and attempts to obtain the hours **after** they have completed the renewal and are selected for an audit, the license will be renewed upon the agreement to, and signing of, a public Board Ordered reprimand and a monetary fine to be determined by the Board. Continuing Education hours must be obtained before October 31<sup>st</sup> of Every Even Numbered Year, the license expiration date.

Effective: 10-27-10

You may legally practice massage therapy in Georgia when your license is in 'ACTIVE' status only. It is considered 'unlicensed practice' to practice massage therapy when your license is in 'Renewal Pending', 'Lapsed', 'Late-Lapsed Renewal Cycle' or any status other than "ACTIVE"

The result may be a Voluntary Cease & Desist order issued to you. Subsequent reinstatement of a lapsed license may also result in Public Board Order reprimanding the unlicensed practice and a monetary fine, which will remain on your public record.

**NOTE: Reinstatement of a license is at the sole discretion of the Board.**

06/11/2012